

## Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 173281

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ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06

SIL-01 L-03 H-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 TAR-02 AGR-20 SPM-01

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TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, ECAFE

SUBJECT: ECAFE: RATIONALIZATION PROJECT

REF: BANGKOK'S A-234; AUGUST 17, 1973

1. USG WELCOMES ECAFE RATIONALIZATION STUDY BEING  
INITIATED ON BASIS RESOLUTION 138 PASSED AT TOKYO PLENARY.  
WE BELIEVE PROJECT CAN MAKE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION NOT  
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PAGE 02 STATE 173281

ONLY TO ECAFE, BUT ALSO TO OTHER REGIONAL COMMISSIONS AND  
ECOSOC, SEVERAL OF WHICH CONSIDERING SIMILAR UNDERTAKING.

2. IN CARRYING OUT THIS STUDY, US REPS SHOULD KEEP IN

MIND WHY ECAFE IS IMPORTANT TO US. WE BELIEVE ORGANIZATION HAS MADE AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS IN FOLLOWING AREAS, WHICH ARE NOT NECESSARILY LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE.

A. REGIONAL COOPERATION. ONE OF ECAFE'S MAJOR AIMS IS TO ENCOURAGE REGIONAL COOPERATION IN FIELDS OF TRADE, FINANCE, TRANSPORTATION, ETC. WE HAVE SUPPORTED SOME OF SUCH INITIATIVES IN PAST AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. WE WOULD NOT WANT TO PROMOTE REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS, HOWEVER, THAT WOULD SUPPORT PROTECTIONIST POLICIES WHICH WOULD CONFLICT WITH POLICIES OF MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS GATT AND IMF.

B. NATURAL RESOURCES. ECAFE HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE IN PROMOTING COOPERATION AMONG NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCIES IN REGION. WE EXPECT TO CONTINUE WORKING CLOSELY WITH IT IN THIS AREA.

C. AGRICULTURE. WITH FOOD CRISIS THREATENING AREA AND RESULTING MAGNIFICATION OF IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURAL PRICING AND TRADE POLICIES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ECAFE-FAO COOPERATION IN THE FOOD AREA ARE OF CONSIDERABLE INTEREST.

D. ECONOMIC SURVEY. FOR MANY YEARS ECAFE HAS MADE A COMPETENT SURVEY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN AREA AND ASSISTED IN DEVELOPING MEANINGFUL STATISTICS FOR AREA. LAST SURVEY WAS GEARED INTO UN'S REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING GOALS AND POLICIES OF SECOND DEVELOPMENT DECADE. THIS IS USEFUL PARTICULARLY SINCE IT EMPHASIZED WHAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THEMSELVES CAN DO IN ADDITION TO WHAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES MIGHT CONTRIBUTE.

E. POPULATION. ECAFE IS HELPING IMPLEMENT AN  
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PAGE 03 STATE 173281

EXPANDED ASIAN POPULATION PROGRAM AND HOSTED SECOND ASIAN POPULATION CONFERENCE IN TOKYO, WHICH ENDORSED CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS IN POPULATION FIELD. IT HAS BUILT UP STRONG SECRETARIAT STAFF IN THIS FIELD.

F. TRANSPORTATION. TRANSPORTATION HAS NOT UNTIL RECENTLY BEEN A MAJOR USG INTEREST IN ECAFE, BUT ECAFE SHOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS FIELD, PARTICULARLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. GOOD TRANSPORTATION ARTERIES ARE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL COMMISSIONS ARE WELL EQUIPPED TO PROMOTE COORDINATION OF NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND POLICIES. OF RECENT INTEREST TO UNITED STATES ARE ACTIVITIES WITH

COMMERCIAL IMPLICATIONS SUCH AS ROVING MISSION ON CONTAINERIZATION WHICH MAY GO TO CHINA AND PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH SHIPPING COMMITTEE, WHICH COULD INFLUENCE MARITIME POLICIES IN AREA.

G. INSTITUTION BUILDING. ECAFE HAS ASSISTED IN FOUNDING NEW ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND MEKONG COMMITTEE. AS IT IDENTIFIES NEW AREAS IN DEVELOPMENT FIELD WHICH ARE NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED, IT SHOULD CONTINUE ON VERY SELECTIVE BASIS TO PROPOSE NEW INSTITUTIONS TO FILL THESE GAPS.

H. COORDINATION. TO DATE ECAFE HAS NOT PLAYED ANY ROLE IN UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMMING PROCESS OR IN REVIEW OF UNDP PROJECTS. IN AN EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN UNDP REGIONAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE ECAFE TO DEVELOP ROLE FOR ITSELF WITH REGARD TO REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL UNDP PROJECTS.

3. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE INTERESTS, US PARTICIPANTS SHOULD KEEP IN MIND FACT INCREASED DECENTRALIZATION OF UN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IS NOT ALWAYS IN BEST INTERESTS OF US OR OVERALL ORGANIZATION. CENTRAL GUIDANCE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN POLICY, ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGET MATTERS.

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PAGE 04 STATE 173281

4. RECENT WASHINGTON REVIEW OF ECAFE HAS HIGHLIGHTED FOLLOWING CRITICISMS OF COMMISSION AS IT HAS DEVELOPED IN RECENT YEARS: (A) ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES ARE TOO DISPERSED, TOO LACKING IN USEFUL FOCUS; (B) MEETINGS ARE TOO LONG AND TOO FILLED WITH TIME WASTED ON FORMALITIES AND REPETITIVE REPORTS; (C) COMMITTEE STRUCTURE NEEDS SOME CONSOLIDATION AND AT LEAST ONE ADDITION; (D) SECRETARIAT SOMETIMES IS TOO AUTONOMOUS BOTH FROM UN MEMBERS AND UN HEADQUARTERS POLICY AND DIRECTIONS.

5. DESPITE THESE WIDELY-HELD VIEWS, ECAFE IS RESPECTED AS GOOD AND USEFUL EXAMPLE OF UN'S REGIONAL APPROACH TO CERTAIN ACTIVITIES. FOR THIS REASON, USG PLANS TO REMAIN A FORCE IN ECAFE'S OPERATIONS AND DECISIONS, EVEN THOUGH OUR VIEWS MAY HAVE TO BE URGED IN MORE SUBTLE WAYS THAN THOSE OF REGIONAL MEMBERS.

6. WASHINGTON AGENCIES HAVE ALSO REVIEWED UNOFFICIAL RATIONALIZATION DISCUSSIONS HELD DURING SUMMER BY GROUPS OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES IN BANGKOK AND REF AIRGRAM. WE COMMEND THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS WORK AND APPROVE IDEA OF HOLDING MEETINGS ON RATIONALIZATION IN BANGKOK LATER THIS YEAR IN EFFORT TO DEVELOP AN EVOLVING CONSENSUS IN TIME FOR SPRING PLENARY.

7. WASHINGTON COMMENTS AND APPROVAL ON MAJOR PROPOSALS DISCUSSED IN THESE LATER MEETINGS REQUIRED. AS INITIAL GUIDANCE, WE PRESENT FOLLOWING SUMMARY COMMENTS ON IDEAS WHICH HAVE BEEN PROPOSED:

(A) ESTABLISHMENT OF A MORE FORMALLY-ORGANIZED COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES. WE SEE CONSIDERABLE MERIT IN PROPOSAL THAT PERMREPS COULD MEET IN JANUARY TO REVIEW AND APPROVE AGENDA FOR SPRING PLENARY AND TO

UNDERTAKE DETAILED REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAM. THIS WOULD REQUIRE HAVING RELEVANT DOCUMENTS PREPARED SUFFICIENTLY EARLY IN DRAFT SO THAT GOVERNMENTS COULD GIVE THEM QUICK REVIEW PRIOR TO PERMREP MEETINGS. WOULD THIS ENTAIL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
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PAGE 05 STATE 173281

INCREASE IN SECRETARIAT BUDGET? SAME QUESTION APPLIES TO POSSIBILITY OF CALLING DURING YEAR OTHER FORMAL MEETINGS OF PERMREPS.

(B) WE APPROVE IDEA OF HOLDING AT LEAST ONE OF THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF MAJOR COMMITTEES IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER RATHER THAN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY.

(C) COMMITTEE STRUCTURE: OUR INITIAL IMPRESSION OF PROPOSED RESTRUCTURING OF COMMITTEES INTO CONFERENCES IS FAVORABLE, BUT WE WANT TO BE CERTAIN CHANGES CAN BE CARRIED OUT WITHOUT INCREASE IN OVERALL SECRETARIAT STAFF OR IN EXPENSES FOR RUNNING COMMITTEE STRUCTURE. WE, THEREFORE, AWAIT MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE MERGERS OR DELETIONS OF SUB-GROUPS AND WHAT IMPACT OF THIS PORTION OF REORGANIZATION WILL BE ON SECRETARIAT STAFFING AND BUDGET. IN MEANTIME, WE DO AGREE THAT ECAFE MEMBERS WANT AND AREA NEEDS MAJOR COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. PLANS FOR SUCH A COMMITTEE, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN IN CAREFUL COORDINATION WITH FAO AND JOINT FAO/ECAFE AGRICULTURAL DIVISION.

(D) PLENARY AND MAJOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THIS IS AREA OF PARTICULAR DISCONTENT AMONG WASHINGTON PARTICIPANTS. WE AGREE WITH OVERALL IDEA THAT MEETINGS SHOULD BE MADE MORE ISSUE-ORIENTED, AS OPPOSED TO CURRENT PRACTICE OF LENGTHY REPORTS AND VAGUE SPEECHES. CAREFUL ELIMINATION OF SOME AGENDA ITEMS BY PERMREPS WOULD BE USEFUL, AS WOULD DISCONTINUING MANY FORMALITIES DURING OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES. TIME LIMIT ON SPEECHES COULD BE ESTABLISHED AND SPECIALIZED AGENCY INTERVENTIONS REDUCED DRASTICALLY. (THEY COULD CIRCULATE SPEECHES, FOR EXAMPLE, RATHER THAN DELIVER THEM ORALLY.) SECRETARIAT REPORTS ON AGENDA ITEMS SHOULD BE CUT DOWN TO FIVE

OR TEN MINUTES AT MOST. PLENARY MIGHT BE ABLE CONSIDER AS FEW AS 6-8 AGENDA ITEMS AND MAJOR COMMITTEES ONLY 2-3. FINALLY, PROPOSAL FOR "TWO-LEVEL" PLENARY (OR INSTITUTIONALIZING EXISTING SESSIONAL COMMITTEE SYSTEM) IS INTERESTING, BUT BELIEVE IDEA WILL HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT IN CONSIDERABLY MORE DETAIL BEFORE WE CAN GIVE FINAL APPROVAL.

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PAGE 06 STATE 173281

(E) "DECISION BY CONSENSUS." AGREE THAT DECISIONS THROUGH THIS HALLOWED ECAFE PRACTICE COULD USEFULLY BE MADE MORE EXPLICIT, BUT US SHOULD NOT TAKE LEAD ON THIS

ONE. MODIFYING "ASIAN WAY" SHOULD BE DONE BY REGIONAL MEMBERS, ALTHOUGH YOU AUTHORIZED TO SUPPORT ANY USEFUL PROPOSALS MADE BY SUCH MEMBERS.

(F) WORK PROGRAM. WHILE DEPARTMENT AGREES WITH CONCLUSION INFORMAL BANGKOK DISCUSSIONS THAT WORK PROGRAM FORMAT SUFFERS FROM COMPLEXITY AND LACK OF CLARITY, IMPROVEMENTS OF THE FORMAT A PROBLEM OF OVERALL UNCONCERN SINCE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS MUST CONFORM TO OVERALL STANDARDS IN USE. THE FORMAT AND QUESTIONS OF STATEMENTS OF OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES, TRUST FUNDS AND INCORPORATION OF EXTRABUDGETARY SOURCES OF FUNDS, ETC. HAVE ALL BEEN SUBJECT OF EXTENSIVE REVIEW BY ECOSOC'S COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND COORDINATION (CPC) WHOSE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE APPROVED BY COUNCIL AND EXPECTED TO BE ADOPTED BY 5TH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO GUIDE PREPARATION FOR NEXT BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET (1976-77) AS WELL AS NEXT QUADRENNIAL MEDIUM TERM PLAN (1976-1979). WHILE ECAFE MIGHT USEFULLY MAKE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS WITHIN TERMS OF CPC RECOMMENDATIONS, THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO ADOPT FORMATS AND SYSTEMS OF PRIORITIES AT VARIANCE WITH COMMON SYSTEMS FOR UN AS A WHOLE. COPY OF CPC RECOMMENDATIONS (E/5364) BEING POUCHED FOR INFO U.S. PERMREP.

(G) DEFINITION OF ECAFE SUB-BODIES: WE APPROVE EFFORTS TO CONSIDERABLY REDUCE CURRENT UNNECESSARILY WIDE RANGE OF TYPES OF ECAFE MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

(H) IF COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE STRUCTURE IS RE-SHAPED AND STREAMLINED, THE ECAFE SECRETARIAT STRUCTURE SHOULD ALSO BE REFINED ACCORDINGLY.

8. EMBASSY AUTHORIZED OPERATE WITHIN ABOVE GENERAL GUIDANCE WHILE SUBMITTING FOR DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL SIGNIFICANT DEVIATIONS FROM ABOVE PROPOSALS AND NEW

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PAGE 07 STATE 173281

PROPOSALS IN OTHER AREAS OF ECAFE ACTIVITIES. ROGERS

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## Message Attributes

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